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LONDON STREET-DEALERS.

WITH the vast extension of London, there has been latterly a marked increase in the number and variety of street-dealers, or costermongers, as they are usually called—a most industrious class of beings, not grudging to start on their perambulations at early morn, and untiring in the prosecution of schemes to earn a livelihood. We shall try to give some idea of this branch of the metropolitan population.

The London costermongers may be divided into four classes—namely, those who have ponies or asses ; those who have hand-carts ; those who are obliged to hire hand-carts ; and those who have baskets. These people attend Billingsgate fish-market, and the fruit and vegetable markets, from three to five o'clock in the mornings ; and though great numbers of them have to travel from all the distant suburbs, they are regularly on their beats, and going their rounds in every part of mighty London, before the breakfast-hour.

People who are strangers to the business of a costermonger may think that the men engaged in it lead indolent lives ; this, however, would be a mistake, inasmuch as the trade is one of constant labour, and full of those discomforts and anxieties which arise from the inclemency of the weather, and the losses resulting from the perishable nature of much of their stock-in-trade.

The fish business is both the most regular and the most profitable branch of the trading industry of these men ; but whether they deal in fish, vegetables, or fruit, they are benefactors to the great body of the industrial classes ; and they not only serve the people with what they require at their own doors, but they supply them at prices below what the articles could be purchased for in the shops. We have known fish caught in the Bay of Galway in the west of Ireland, and the Firth of Forth in Scotland, sold by the London costermongers in good condition at prices below what they originally cost the wholesale dealers. This may seem strange to people who do not know the peculiarities of the trade ; the following, however,

will explain the matter. The live and the better sort of ice-packed fish are consigned to, and command a certain price from, the higher class of dealers ; and whatever residue may be left after these people are served, is sold to the street-dealers and the small fry of shopkeepers. If it were not for the great army of street-dealers who purchase the fish left on the hands of the agents and wholesale merchants, the losses of the latter would frequently be of a very serious character, and this would be the more so upon occasions when the market is glutted.

Before railways and welled-boats equalised the prices of provisions both at home and abroad, fish and other articles of a perishable nature could often be purchased in the country districts at cheap rates ; but, under the present circumstances of cheap and speedy conveyance, these classes of goods are consigned to agents and wholesale merchants both in London and the other large towns ; instead, therefore, of their being sold piecemeal, as was formerly the case, they are now sold in bulk, and paid for in cash. Sixty years ago, the fishermen of the Holy Island (Farne Island) were wont to cure nearly all the fish they caught ; after being salted, the fish was dried on the shingle in the summer, and when dry, stacked ready for exportation. The railway has done away with the salting and drying process ; and the people in the towns along the coast are now worse off for fish, and pay a higher price for what they obtain, than the inhabitants in the great industrial districts.

Mostly all the fish sold by auction in Billingsgate Market are packed in round baskets, and it is amusing to see the costermongers taking these baskets up and weighing them in their arms, and to observe the result of each weighing on their faces as they deposit them on the ground again. It is said, and we believe with truth, that many of these men can, by lengthened experience, tell the weight of the fish in a hamper to within a pound or two.

The social habits of the costermongers are in a great measure peculiar to themselves. Both the men and the women are fond of amusement ; they

enjoy the bills of fare provided for them in the penny gaffs; and those among them who have pony or donkey traps, occasionally make excursions into the country. We have seen them going to and returning from 'the Derby,' that grand holiday of Londoners. Among themselves the costermongers are sharp and shrewd men of business; but they are children so far as a knowledge of men and things beyond the pale of their own society is concerned. Their trading morality is little, if at all, inferior to that of the general-dealing public. We may mention that many of the more prudent members of this class of men are enabled by their industry to raise themselves in the social scale, by becoming greengrocers, coal-dealers, or setting up in the fried-fish line.

In London, there is a vast plodding army of people who live by keeping stalls in the street-markets which are scattered over all the industrial districts. The battle of life which is constantly being fought in these strange trafficking communities is full of hardship, suffering, and privation. Thousands of the people engaged as dealers in these places live from hand to mouth; and a stormy Saturday often means to them a dinnerless Sunday and a week back in their rent. Were it not for the poor miserable condition of many of the men and women who stand shivering at their stalls in the cold raw winter air, one could almost feel amused at the strange scenes which are constantly taking place, and the Babel of tongues which mocks all ordinary vocal confusion. Customers are invited to purchase articles of almost every description within the requirements of civilised society. Thousands of people are pushing and elbowing their way. Here a Cheap-John is retailing his rude witticisms and stale jests to induce people to purchase his Sheffield cutlery; and at a little distance, a sleight-of-hand gentleman is selling purses with half-crowns in them for one shilling each, to men who allow their sense of seeing to make fools of their judgment. A number of little boys are having a feed of ice-cream made of corn-flour and seasoned with essence of lemon; the gin palaces are filled with men, women, children, noise, smoke, and gas. The night is cold, and the baked-potato men are doing a good trade; here a gentleman with a professional air and a grandiloquent style is puffing his cure-all pills; and over the way, a man with a well-curled head of hair is retailing fancy boxes of pomatum, which not only makes the hair grow, but causes it to curl in a style equal to his own. These pill and pomatum men have frequented Leather Lane during several years, and both seem to have thriven upon their purging and curling business.

The last time we had a stroll through Leather Lane Market, we were much interested in a poor woman who was exposing pea-soup for sale. She was evidently new to the business, from her shy and retiring manner, and from a decided air of respectability. It was plain she had met with sad reverse of fortune. From the ever-recurring events which affect the fortunes of human beings, numbers of people in London are almost daily falling from one social position to another, until they find their level in the bleak region of abject poverty; and the most serious thing connected with the unfortunate condition of this class of people is, that

their sufferings are much greater than if they had been trained in the school of adversity; and they are also without the little resources of the regular poor, who have been long drilled in misery.

The poor people who struggle for a living by attending at any of the street-markets, of which Leather Lane is a type, have, in most cases, a hard battle to fight to enable them to keep their souls and bodies together; but to our minds, the condition of the men and women who have stalls in the streets, and who are obliged to attend to them daily in all weathers from year to year, until they fall like withered leaves, is one of even greater suffering than that of the market-dealers. During several years, a poor blind man made a stall of a part of the iron rails of Newgate Prison, on which he hung a few trifling articles for sale. The suffering which that helpless man uncomplainingly endured must have made the latter years of his life a martyrdom. From long exposure to the chilling colds of winter, and not being able to move about, his limbs had become fearfully swollen, and his face and hands seemed as if his flesh and blood had got mixed up into one liver-coloured mass. We never passed that man in the cold weather of winter without sharing in his sufferings, and wishing in our heart that he might pass away to his place of rest. His time came. One morning we missed him, and we then knew that he had gone to the home of his fathers. But within a few paces of the ground he occupied, an old woman, who had been his street neighbour during several years, was left sitting and suffering and waiting for a call!

The street-dealers who live by hawking water-cresses form a numerous and hard-working class; their voices are heard daily in all the thoroughfares of mighty London in winter, in summer, in fair weather and in foul. These people make their purchases at one or other of the wholesale markets early in the mornings. Some of them confine their peregrinations to certain districts; others, however, go where they think to succeed best; and as they require to go their morning rounds before the breakfast-hour, they are generally both jaded and hungry before they can have their own morning meal. It would be difficult for a person unacquainted with this apparently trifling trade to form anything like an idea of the money turned over by the wholesale dealers. We have reason, however, to believe that there is one man in the business in Covent Garden Market whose sales amount to at least ten thousand pounds annually!

In the winter season, the baked potato and roasted chestnut trades employ a considerable number of men, women, and children. A warm baked potato in the cold weather, with the condiment of a little salt and butter, is a most acceptable offering to the hungry stomach of a poor wretch who cannot afford a regular meal of food, and whose accidental home is where chance may direct.

Shrimps, whelks, cockles, winkles, and mussels employ a goodly number of people, both young and old, who hawk them about on hand-carts or baskets. From the ups and downs of fortune among these people, not a few of them, instead of having hand-carts or baskets of their own, are obliged to hire the one or the other, as the case may be, and, as a necessary consequence, the profits are reduced very considerably by the sum paid for the loan.

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When reaching their respective beats, their voices are sent as heralds before them, and they are frequently obliged to keep moving along, until they are wearied out with fatigue, hunger, and disappointment. Of late years, a new street business has sprung into existence; we allude to the traffic in button-hole flowers. This business is solely in the hands of females, but mostly young girls; those among them who are neat, clean, and good-looking command the best sale. It would be difficult to say with anything like the truth the amount of money which is spent in the course of twelve months on these floral button-hole decorations. This floral fashion seems to indicate a refined taste, and the character of the flowers worn serves to give an idea of the social grade of the wearer. The head-clerk in a lawyer's office or a mercantile establishment may sport a blushing scarlet camellia, at from ninepence to double that amount, while the subs ornament their left breasts with penny or twopenny bouquets. But the highest of these sums is small when compared to the amount paid for breast-flowers by some of the gentlemen of independent means. We know that a West-end florist who supplies button-hole decorations has one customer whose yearly account is seldom less than forty pounds!

Those flower-girls who have a taste for a judicious arrangement of colours, manage to have their little flat baskets very prettily decorated; but the number of these is very small. During the spring and summer months, numbers of people make a living by selling living flowers; and the class of people who have a taste for window floral garden display can have choice selections of plants at a much cheaper rate than they can be purchased at in the country districts. Nearly all London people have a love for flowers, and it is pleasant to see the value put upon a few feet of ground which can be turned into a miniature garden by its holder. The cultivation of flowers, like that of water-cresses, is a special business with numbers of men within a few miles of London, and nearly all their pretty produce is disposed of in the new flower-market at Covent Garden.

The selling of matches and 'vesuvians' is now a great trade, giving subsistence to thousands of poor people. 'Bryant and May' have called into existence a legion of match-dealers, who ply their business with wonderful industry in both town and country. A large number of boys in London pass the first years of their trading probation on the streets in the match-trade; and how they end their careers, the fates alone can tell! The neighbourhood of the Mansion-house, Cornhill, Lombard Street, and London Bridge swarms daily with a heterogeneous class of people, who deal in a miscellaneous assortment of articles, such as the Americans would call Yankee notions. Many of the things are very neatly got up, and some of an ingenious construction. Few of them, however, range above a penny in price; but how many of them are made for the money must seem a mystery to the most of people. We remember a man who some years ago made an excellent living by selling penny microscopes in the streets of London. These little optical instruments had a very considerable magnifying power, and their construction was both simple and ingenious. Their frames were small pill-boxes, without lids or bottoms; and the lenses

were made of little globules of a certain description of gum. At the present time, a good trade is done with small glass globes, microscopes filled with water. The water in these instruments can only be taken out or put in by the globes being heated over a spirit-lamp. Although these instruments are much larger than the gum ones, they are a long way inferior in their magnifying power.

When Sir Robert Peel relieved the newspapers of the stamp and advertisement duties, a new class of street-dealers was called into existence, who might be looked upon as so many wingless Mercuries: we allude to the army of news-boys which the new fiscal arrangement let loose both in London and all the large towns in the United Kingdom. The London news-boys are now a smart race; they know how to ring the changes, and how to make old editions pass for new ones. But smart as they are, they are much behind the same class in New York; nearly all the boys in that city are Irish either by birth or parentage, and their natural wit and shrewdness are not long of being improved by Yankee 'cuteness.'

It is pretty generally thought by the outside public that the street-dealers of London are an improvident and an immoral set of people; but this seems to us to be an assumption scarcely warranted by facts. They are diligent in their calling, and fulfil a useful purpose in a monstrously overgrown city. Let us, in thinking of their failings, recollect that they undergo a continual struggle to obtain the common necessities of life. Their endeavour to support themselves and their families gives them a claim upon our kindly sympathy; and it should not be forgotten that the social condition of most of these people has been made for them by circumstances over which they had no control. In concluding, we may mention, that a few weeks of severe winter weather, such as we had at Christmas, cause a dreadful amount of suffering to vast numbers of these people, and cost many of them their lives.

W A L T E R ' S W O R D .

CHAPTER IX.—A FIRST BID.

If the painter, as we have shewn, is in one point at a disadvantage, as compared with the author, in another he is much more fortunate. 'The Exhibition,' as the annual show at the Royal Academy, notwithstanding its many rivals of the same name, is still called, is an institution that in literature has no parallel, and which is of the greatest possible benefit to the young artist. Of course, true merit will make its way in the end in any calling; but a man may write the best book in the world, and even publish it (though that is not so easy to one unknown and poor), and yet be some considerable time before he can persuade the world to read it; but when a painting has once got admittance within the Academy walls, all has been done for it in the way of introduction to the public that it can possibly need. The art critics may praise it, or let it alone; it may be hung well or ill, and a great grievance is made (by those who have not much confidence in their own work) in the latter case; we have even known a young gentleman, on Varnishing Day, so dissatisfied with the position of his picture, that he cut it out of its frame; but still, so long as it is not hung with its

face to the wall, all that have eyes can see it. He that has painted it, if it be worthy, has got his foot set on the first round of the ladder of Fame. There is nothing, I repeat, to be compared with this, in the way of opportunity, in the sister art of literature. I may have my essay, my story, my poem, in the leading magazine, for instance, but people do not take up the leading magazine in such numbers as crowd the great rooms in Piccadilly, nor does the 'taking it up' always involve the reading of it. Whereas, folks come to the picture-gallery to see the pictures, and especially, in many cases, to have the credit of discovering some embryo genius, who has no influence with the papers, and of whom they may say, at the spring dinner-parties: 'By-the-bye, did you happen to see that exquisite little thing called "Supplication" in the right-hand corner of Room 5?' And if you didn't, you will not escape hearing about it.

So young Walter Litton had really cause to congratulate himself in that the gallery gods had relaxed their brows, and resolved to hang, instead of banishing him, as before. Had such a stroke of good-fortune happened to him in the previous year, it would have rejoiced him exceedingly: he would have felt it to be the very accolade of his knighthood, a most refreshing spray from the fountain of all honour. But now, matters were very different with him; Fame had ceased to be his deity; and the news that his friend had brought him was hailed rather because it was not that other news which he had feared to hear, than upon its own account, as a relief rather than a triumph. Still, he was glad that his friend was glad, and that the event had justified his praise of his handiwork. It was a pleasure to him, if not the great joy he had expected, to make one of that fortunate band on Varnishing Day, and to feel his foot on the ladder—not of Fame, but of the steps that it was necessary for him to use, to give the last touches to 'Supplication,' née 'Philippa.' It was hung a long way up, but yet, he was not dissatisfied. He did not fear its being overlooked—or, rather, overlooked: not from vanity, though he had a good opinion of its merits, but simply because it so riveted his own eyes that he could not understand its escaping those of others. He was almost glad that his friend had sent nothing to 'the Big Shop' that year, so that he could contemplate it quite alone. He had acquaintances, of course, equally fortunate with himself, who passed their friendly comments upon it; but they gave him little pleasure. He cared for no approbation, no notice of it, save from one person, who, in all probability, would never see it. It was to the last degree improbable that Mrs Selwyn should visit the Royal Academy; Reginald, he knew, cared nothing for art, and, besides, had no shillings to throw away on such an expedition. Upon the whole, he hardly knew whether he was better satisfied that the picture had been accepted, than he would have been to have had it back again in his own chamber, to contemplate it at his leisure. For he did not, as many young painters do, haunt the spot where it hung; not from any fear of adverse criticism, or neglect, but because remarks upon it of any sort would, he felt, have been painful to him. The subject was sacred to him, in a sense that does not often affect young gentlemen-painters—nor old ones, for that matter—who 'go in' for sacred subjects.

Whether 'Supplication' was really a good picture or not, this present writer, who is, he confesses, one of those ignorant Philistines who only know what they like, must be excused from positively asserting. 'If you want to know whether a diamond is a good one,' said an eminent R.A. in my hearing, 'you go to a jeweller for his opinion; and if you want to know whether a painting is good or bad, you must go to a painter for the information: to buy one upon your own responsibility, is an act of madness; to pass your opinion upon it, is an impertinence.' I am therefore silent (except that I venture to express a wish that Literature stood upon equally lofty ground with Art) upon the merits of 'Supplication.' The newspapers were silent also, greatly to Mr John Pelter's disgust, with the exception of a few lines of praise that he himself got inserted in the *Art Critic*, and the inspiration of which Walter immediately detected, though he did not say so, for his friend's sake. It annoyed honest Jack immensely that there seemed so little chance of seeing that red star in the corner of Litton's picture which has lit up the despondent gloom of so many a young painter, and made his darkness day. After the first month, most pictures that are fated to sell, are sold; and more than a month had passed since early May. Some weeks after this date, notwithstanding, there came a letter to Walter one evening—when the two friends were together as usual—from the Academy official, to ask what price he had put upon his picture; and this, after a moment's hesitation, he placed in Pelter's hand.

'Well, better late than never, my lad,' cried the latter joyfully. 'This is as it should be. I had begun to think that all the world was blind.'

'They have not seen with your kind eyes, Jack,' said the other gravely; 'that is all.'

'Well, they see now, and that's something,' answered Pelter impatiently. 'But why does this bungling fellow write to *you*, instead of telling the man or the woman—for I'll take two to one it's a woman. There's true religion in that picture, Walter, I don't mind telling you, now that you have found a purchaser. It's some woman with good eyes in her head, and a good heart, and, I hope, a good balance at her banker's, who wants it. Well, I say, why didn't the fellow tell her your price at once?'

'Because he didn't know it,' said Walter quietly.

'Not know it! Why, didn't you fix it a hundred pounds yourself?'

'No, Jack; that was your price, not mine. I didn't mention any price; indeed, as I told you long ago, I don't think I care to sell it.'

'Not sell it! Then why the deuce did you paint it?'

To paint a picture without the intention of getting rid of it, and as soon as you could, was, in Jack's eyes, the act of a lunatic.

'I painted it for my pleasure.'

'Oh, did you, begad? Then you are nothing better than an amateur.' The epithet had the same force with Mr Pelter as though he had called a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England a ranter. 'Of course, you can do as you please, if you are rich enough. You can paint a dozen pictures, and hang them up in your room, so that wherever you turn you can see yourself, as it were, in your own looking-glass. One may be as vain as one

pleases, or anything else one pleases, if one is rich. And yet, I thought I heard you the other day complaining about shortness of cash ; to be sure, it did not affect yourself, but only stood in the way of what was, after all, perhaps a Quixotic scheme of benevolence, in connection with an old cobbler' —

'I am not rich, my dear fellow,' interrupted Walter gravely ; 'but when a man spends everything upon himself, as I once heard you observe, he can make a little money go a good way.'

'I didn't say it of *you*,' growled Pelter, touched with the other's resolute good-humour.

'No ; I am sure you didn't, though, for that matter, I am just as selfish as other people. You are quite right in suggesting that I cannot afford to keep my pictures in general for my own delectation, nor even, perhaps, this particular one ; and yet I do propose for once to indulge myself in the luxury. If you ask me why —'

'Not I !' struck in Jack savagely. 'I am not a woman, that I should wish to pry into any man's secrets.'

'There is no secret,' said Walter hastily ; 'it is perhaps, after all, but a foolish sentiment.'

'Of course it is. I know that much without your telling me,' answered the other contemptuously. 'But you will find such sentiments costly even for a rich man. What will they think of you at the Big Shop, when it is understood you do not wish to sell your pictures ? They will say that it is occupying a space that might be better used ; that you are taking the bread out of some poor man's mouth ; and they will—for once—be right.'

'I wish I had never sent the picture there at all,' sighed Walter. 'I don't mean that your advice, Jack, wasn't wise as well as kind,' added he quickly, laying his hand on the other's arm ; 'but I never thought this would have happened—that anybody would have wanted to buy it.'

'Well, I never like talking about what I don't understand, so we'll say no more about it.'

By the last post that night, there came another letter for Walter.

'There's a second appeal to your hard heart,' said Jack, who had by no means recovered his usual equanimity ; he was exceedingly annoyed by Litton's determination not to sell his picture, which he ascribed to morbid vanity. 'If it's from the Trustees of the National Gallery, I do hope you will re-consider your objections.'

'It is not from the Academy,' said Walter scrutinising the envelope attentively. 'It seems to me a lady's hand.'

'Then I'll be off,' replied Pelter, not sorry for once to leave the society of his friend. 'I hope it is not from Nellie Neale, to announce to grandmamma her intention of committing suicide, for love of her venerable relative. I saw her yesterday, as I passed her father's stall, and she looked ill enough and wretched enough for anything.—What with his Red Riding-hoods, and his pictures that are not to sell,' growled Jack, as he descended to his own den, 'I believe the lad is half-cracked.'

At any other moment, this reference to Nellie Neale's altered looks would have aroused Walter's keenest sympathy, but as it was, the words fell almost unheeded upon his ear. The idea had suddenly seized him that the note which he held in his hand was from Lotty herself, wrung from her, perhaps, by some extremity of poverty or sorrow.

It was to the last degree unlikely that she should write to him, but it was possible ; and if she had done so, her need must be great indeed. He had witnessed her signature on the occasion of her marriage, and her handwriting was something like that in which the address of the note was written. Still, all women write alike. Moreover, there was a sort of typical initial upon the envelope—a Bee—which could scarcely have been adopted by her husband : if he had chosen anything characteristic for such a purpose—which was in itself highly improbable—it ought rather to have been a Butterfly, that is, if that insect's name had begun with an S. Upon the whole, this surmise of Walter's almost bore out Mr Pelter's indignant conjecture that his friend was not quite in his right mind, for, absurd as it was, it agitated him excessively. He tore the Bee all to pieces in his trepidation, and not until his eye had run to the signature, which was totally unknown to him, did he recover his usual calmness. The communication had reference to his picture, after all :

DEAR SIR—I wish to know what price you have put upon your picture entitled 'Supplication,' 2940 in the Academy catalogue ? I made inquiries of the clerk in charge, who will doubtless have communicated with you ; but in order that no mistake may occur in the matter, I have ventured to thus address you personally. I am very anxious to become the purchaser of the work in question.—Yours obediently,

ROBERT BURROUGHS.

The hair was the hair of Esau, but the words were unmistakably Jacob's : the name, that is, was a man's name, but the handwriting, and especially the style, were beyond doubt those of a lady. Even Walter, who was by no means well versed in business matters, was struck with the imprudence of the words, 'I am very anxious to become the purchaser,' addressed as they were to one who had placed no figure upon his goods. It would have been a very strong temptation to most people to ask a fancy price. Moreover, it was probable that a fancy price might really be paid—or, at all events, that Robert Burroughes was in a position to pay it, since his address was Willowbank, Regent's Park, one of those large houses standing in extensive grounds of their own, on the banks of the ornamental water, and which have been the envy of so many Londoners, as combining in them the advantages both of town and country. Burroughes, it is true, was a very common name, but very common people are often uncommonly rich. If, instead of asking a hundred pounds, he were to ask double the money, it was quite possible he would get it. And two hundred pounds, as Walter confessed to himself, would be very useful to him. The fifty pounds he had lent to Selwyn, he never expected to see again, nor even wished to do so—except so far as its repayment would have been proof of his friend's prosperity ; but the loan had left the balance at his banker's very low, so low, that he had not re-engaged Red Riding-hood's services for several weeks, though he really had had occasion for them, and, what was more, felt she needed the money. As to what Pelter had said about her falling in love with him, the more he had thought of it, the more ridiculous the notion had appeared to him. Nellie was an excellent sitter, and used to his ways, and he was fully determined to employ her again,

when he should be once more in funds. Yes, two hundred pounds would set him up for the next six months very comfortably : he might ask this Mr Burroughes for even more, perhaps. But Walter's conscience was still young and tender ; he did not even reason, as he might fairly have done : 'I put a fancy price upon this picture myself, and therefore it is only just that I should charge another in the same proportion.' He thought that, since two hundred pounds was double its fair market value, as assessed by Pelter, who knew the price of things, and was certainly not likely to under-value his friend's production—he ought not to ask a greater sum for it ; and yet he did not feel inclined to give up the gratification of possessing the picture for that sum. He might, it is true, put such a price upon it as was prohibitory, and which his correspondent would understand as such ; but that course had too strong a flavour of conceit—of 'bumptiousness,' as Jack would call it—to recommend itself to him. Finally, he sat down, and wrote a note, acknowledging, in courteous terms, the compliment Mr Burroughes had paid him, and expressing regret for the trouble to which that gentleman had been put, but explaining that the picture was not for sale.

Then, late as it was, he went out, and posted the letter ; not that he was afraid of being argued out of his determination by his friend, for he was tolerably certain that Pelter had said his last word upon the matter, but because he had doubts of his own firmness, if he should suffer his mind to dwell on so tempting an alternative. He felt that it would be for his happiness to keep the picture, yet also for his disadvantage. His reason told him that he had no right to indulge in such extravagance, his common-sense suggested : 'If you must retain this picture, why not take a copy of it, and sell either that or the original to Mr Burroughes ?' and he feared that their united force might overcome a certain feeling within him, which not only prompted him to keep the painting, but revolted against either it or a copy of it passing into the hands of any one else.

CHAPTER X.—THE UNKNOWN PATRON.

Of the fashion and appearance of Mr Walter Litton's studio, I have already spoken, though not at length : it was unnecessary to do so, since it was very much like other painting apartments of young gentlemen in his profession who have not as yet found themselves famous. It was dirty and dingy where the light fell upon it, and dirtier and dingier where it did not. The 'slavey' in the Beech Street lodging-house had not much time to spare for cleansing operations, and still less inclination for them ; she excused herself for all neglect upon the ground, that 'them artists did not like having their things meddled with ;' and she did not run counter to their wishes in that respect. The bedrooms were not much better looked after than the sitting-rooms, with one exception ; that of Walter Litton's 'was spick and span' as to order and cleanliness, and withal so prettily furnished, that it had obtained, from Mr John Pelter, the somewhat contemptuous title of 'the Bower.' But the slavey had little to do with the Bower, which was 'looked after' by an occasional retainer of Litton's own—an ancient charwoman, who came in once a week to make 'a thorough turn-out,' as

she expressed it, of that apartment, and to dust its somewhat elaborate furniture.

'Mark my words, Litton,' Jack once observed, while eyeing superciliously the shining wardrobe, the dressing-table with its snowy covering, and the various little knick-knacks which adorned the chamber of his friend—'you will marry early.' He had uttered it in a tone of mournful conviction, as though he had said : 'You will die young.' He thought that all these things were signs of a domestic turn of mind in Walter, and presages of the matrimonial yoke ; whereas they were perhaps but the result of a longer home experience (short as it had been) than poor Jack had had, and of a university education. The contents of Mr Pelter's studio ran over, as it were, into his sleeping-apartment, in which were to be found various early efforts of his genius, which not even the picture-dealers would regard with any favour, huddled together, like sheep in a storm, with their faces to the wall. Now, Walter's 'Bower' did not smack of 'the shop' at all : its only pictures were a small portrait of his mother, and two engravings, one of his old college, and one of the Head of that Royal and Religious Foundation, an austere unlikeable man, who had never looked kindly upon the young fellow, nor, indeed, in his own opinion, had had cause to do so, since Litton had 'only not disgraced himself' by taking an ordinary degree ; but still, for the sake of old times, there the hard old scholar hung. As Walter lay in bed that morning, thinking, his eye lit upon this portrait, and straightway his thoughts wandered to that time, not far back in point of years, and yet so distant from his present, when the work of life had not begun—to those college days, which, to such as he, not striving for collegiate prizes, are a three years' holiday, a time of youth and friendship, such as can never be again. It had been an unreal time perhaps ; a world quite different from the great work-a-day one ; his judgment had been less mature than it was now ; he felt, for instance, that Jack Pelter had more true grit in him, more bottom under the rough rubble than perhaps any of his then companions ; but some of them had been very bright and dear to him, one of them especially ; a man not dear to him now : he felt that, in spite of himself, though he was neither envious nor jealous of him. He had never had much respect for Reginald Selwyn, but respect had not been so necessary a component of friendship as it had become now ; he had loved him as an elder brother, without the insight into his character that such consanguinity compels. All that was over now ; and why ? He did not answer that question to himself, although he put it ; but his thoughts somehow wandered back to the subject they had started from, and which had even mingled with his dreams—his picture in the Academy. There was a bare space on the walls of his little room, above the fireplace, and he now made up his mind that there it should be hung. He would not sell it, even if the chance of doing so should once more offer itself, which was very unlikely. On the whole, he did not regret that note he had posted overnight to Mr Burroughes of the Regent's Park. He heard his friend splashing in his bath in the room below, and afterwards whistling, as his custom was, over his careless toilet. Jack's good-humour had doubtless returned to him long ere this, but still he would say nothing to him about that

tempting offer. He would keep his own counsel, and let him suppose the letter had been a *billet-doux*, a dun, a challenge—what he pleased, in fact, so long as his guess was wide of the mark. When, however, he descended as usual to breakfast with his friend, and found him frank and hearty as ever, his conscience smote him for his reticence; he had, it is true, already one secret of his own, into which Jack had not been permitted to look—namely, his tenderness for Lotty—but that was an affair as private, and almost as sacred, as his prayers; whereas this offer for his picture he felt to be almost a common property between them, for, without Jack's advice, he would never have sent it to the Academy at all: they had consulted together over it, both as to its price and its merits, and not a few of the latter had, he confessed to himself, been owing to the other's suggestions. A certain sense of ingratitude, and also the knowledge that there was something about which they could not converse, weighed upon Walter's spirits, and he was not himself that morning. It was quite a relief to him to escape from Jack, and find himself in his own room alone. And yet he was not at ease even there; the same almost feminine tenderness of disposition that had caused him to retain his picture for the sake of the associations connected with it, gave him pain, because of his treatment of his friend. He could not set to work as usual. To some, it may seem easy for a painter to do this under any circumstances; an author, it may be thought, whose mind is troubled, is likely enough to be incapacitated from employing his mind in composition; but a painter can have no such excuse. And this is probably true enough of a painter who is also a glazier. But the work of the artist—and Walter Litton, though his talents were immature, and often misdirected, was a true artist—is not mechanical, although he labours with his hands. If he had had a model before him, he could perhaps have compelled his own attention to the canvas, but as it was, it was distracted by other thoughts: he made up his mind that he would call at the cobbler's that very day, and engage Red Riding-hood, if, indeed, she was well enough to resume her sittings. He could not quite recall what Pelter had said about her, though he knew there was something wrong. His whole mind was confused and jaded, and incapable of effort. Perhaps it was that glass of malt liquor, which, contrary to his habit, he had taken after breakfast that morning, for the sake of good-fellowship, and to make up to his beer-drinking friend for other shortcomings. At eleven o'clock the slavey brought him a letter—not on a silver salver, genteel reader, but in her damp red hand—and she grinned as she delivered it: like the last, it was in a lady's hand, but it was not on that account that she grinned, for she did not know one handwriting from another.

'Why, I never heard the postman's knock, Jenny,' said Walter kindly.

'It tain't the postman,' said she, stuffing the end of her apron into her mouth, to stifle a giggle; 'it be an ever-so-big footman, with a white head with an illigant split in it, and a bell-rope at his shoulder.'

'That's called a shoulder-knot, Jenny. Ah, very good—he had rapidly cast his eye over the contents of the letter—' tell him to wait, and I will write an answer.'

His tone was careless, but the note had, in fact,

surprised him very much. It came from the same address as before, and was in the same hand:

'DEAR SIR—it began, 'I am in receipt of your letter, in which you state that your picture is not for sale. At the risk of being deemed impertinent, I write to you once more to express a hope that you may be induced to reconsider this decision. That the work is very meritorious as a painting, I have no doubt; but its artistic merits, if I may say so without offence, are its least attraction in my eyes; I have quite another reason for wishing to possess it. It is difficult, impossible, indeed, to explain this by letter; but if your resolve not to part with it is capable of change, I would earnestly entreat you to give me a few minutes' conversation upon this subject. I am confined to my house by a severe attack of gout, else I would do myself the honour of calling on you; but as that is impossible, might I ask the favour of your looking in on me, at any hour you please to name—this day, if possible? The bearer will await your reply.—Yours faithfully,

ROBERT BURROUGHS.'

The gout from which this gentleman was suffering was certainly not in his hand, for the writing was firm and distinct, though very feminine in its character. Walter felt so curious about the whole affair, that he had almost a mind to summon the ever-so-big footman with the bell-rope, and question him about his master; but such a proceeding would, to say the least of it, have been undignified. Jack had often warned him never to express surprise with respect to any application for a picture, 'however much and naturally you may be yourself astonished at it.' Of course, if he was obstinately resolved not to part with this one, he had simply to pen a few words to that effect, and there was an end to the matter. But he did not wish to act so abruptly; partly, because it seemed rude to do so, but still more because he had a strong desire to have this mystery solved. It was not very flattering to find that his *chef-d'œuvre* was not in demand on account of its own merits, and yet that 'quite another reason' so excited his curiosity that he scarcely felt the wound to his self-love. Nay, he even felt some sympathy with Mr Robert Burroughes, in that he felt his own affection for the picture did not rest upon the ground either of its conception or execution; but upon something else, albeit, that something could not be common between them. At all events, he resolved to see this would-be patron, and to be civil to him, though he by no means made up his mind to let the picture go. There might be something in it, which had struck Mr Burroughes's fancy, that was capable of repetition, and this might procure him an order for another work. Though he had been so self-willed and obdurate in this particular affair, Walter was not blind to his own interests in a general way, nor less desirous of making his way in the world than any other young fellow. So he wrote a polite note to say that he would do himself the pleasure of calling at Willowbank that afternoon, at three o'clock, and despatched it by the white-headed footman.

Then a sudden impulse moved him to run downstairs and place both the letters of Mr Burroughes in the hands of faithful Jack, and he obeyed it.

'My dear Watty,' said the other, looking not at them, but at him, with his kind eyes, 'are you

sure you are right about this? You are not going to make me your confidant, I hope, because you think I am huffy and vexed with you? That is all over and gone, as far as I am concerned.'

'I daresay I seemed foolish and impracticable,' answered Walter, 'but I really had my reasons.'

'And, very likely, sufficient ones, my lad. I don't say that your resolution to keep your picture was no business of mine, for what concerns you must needs concern me, but I feel that I was dictatorial about it.'

'Not a bit, Jack. Please, don't say another word about it.'

'But these letters—there are some things, Watty, you know, that one should not tell even to one's friends, for the sake of others—are you sure I have a right to see them?'

'Certainly you have, since I give them to you. It's the funniest thing that ever happened, you will say.'

'Are they from a woman, Watty?' inquired Jack, still hesitating.

'Not they, though the handwriting looks like it. They're all about that picture, from a Mr Robert Burroughes.'

Jack read them carefully, but without the smile that Walter had expected to see illumine his jolly face.

'There's something wrong here, my lad,' said he gravely. 'These letters are not from a man, in my opinion; they're from a woman; and she doesn't want your picture at all.'

'What the deuce does she want, then? You don't mean to say that she wants *me*!—that she has fallen in love with your humble servant, as you always said little Red Riding-hood would do! You will make me a coxcomb.' Walter was not a coxcomb, but he did remember how Selwyn had said: 'My aunt has fallen in love with you,' on his first meeting with that lady, and also the attention she subsequently paid to him at Penaddon.

'No, Walter; I don't seriously think Miss Nellie has done that, although I fear there is something amiss with her in that way; and if she were, the misfortune would be almost wholly on her side; but if this—this communication should be what I suspect it is, the misfortune would be on your side.'

'You must have been reading the adventures of Mr Tom Jones, or Mr Gil Blas, of late, Jack.'

'No; but I have been reading human nature—though not the best side of it, perhaps—for more years than you have. I could tell you a story of real life that mates with that of the Lady Clara Vere de Vere of your favourite poet; only with a difference. I could tell you, I say'—and here Jack began to pace the room with rapid strides—'of a young fellow still in his teens, for whom a great lady once entertained a great passion. Perhaps she would have married him, if she could; perhaps she only persuaded him that such was her desire. She wrote to him, sometimes by the post, sometimes by just such a wonderful footman as I saw here in our passage this morning; she invited him to her house. She flattered, fondled, spoiled him. He was a lad like yourself, ingenuous, high-spirited, with a future—a great future, as he thought, poor devil—before him. She was older than he, though she did not look it, and she had more than twice his wits. It was an unequal match in more senses than one, and the weaker

one went to the wall. There are some things, as I have just said, that it is well for a man to be silent about, even to his best friend, but I will tell you this much—that woman ruined the lad. He did not cut his throat, you understand, like "young Lawrence"—it would have been better for him, perhaps, if he had—but he lost all he had, his heart, his hopes, his faith: she killed him.'

'He is dead, then?' said Walter gravely.

'Yes; he died years and years ago, God help him! It is not a pleasant story,' continued Pelter, after a pause; 'but I have told you it, because I don't want you to perish in the same pitfall. Of course, I may be all wrong in supposing that there is any risk. Most people will laugh at such a danger, which seems to them imaginary, will call it ridiculous, impossible, and the like; and perhaps it would have been impossible in their case; but most people are fools. Such things, it is true, don't happen often, but they do happen.'

It would have been easy enough for a much duller man than Walter Litton to perceive that Pelter had been speaking of himself: his bitter excited tone, his looks, his very gait, as he walked hastily to and fro, as if impatient of the folly he described, betrayed it.

But for this, Walter himself would have ridiculed the story, and did ridicule it even now, so far as it had application to his own position. That Mr Robert Burroughes should turn out to be a middle-aged lady of high rank, who had fallen in love with him, unknown to himself, tickled his sense of humour; if it was so, it seemed to him that the Bee (and it was a very large one) impressed upon her envelopes was also in her bonnet—that she must be mad.

'But you would not wish me to cancel my appointment at Willowbank?' inquired he, and his eye twinkled with fun in spite of himself, 'for I have made one for three o'clock.'

'Of course not. But remember my story, and forget, please, that it was I who told it.'

'I will,' said Walter, made serious by his friend's unwonted tone, which was at once abrupt and pathetic. It was evident that, in this case, good advice had cost the giver something.

'No,' continued Pelter in his old manner; 'I daresay your visit will turn out to be commonplace enough. Mr Burroughes is, doubtless, only an eccentric old fellow, who takes fancies to pictures, and doesn't care what he gives for them. Your refusal to part with yours has probably whetted his appetite, and may turn out to be the happiest fluke for you.'

'Thank you for the compliment. If he had taken a fancy to one of yours, you would not have set it down to his eccentricity, I'll warrant, Mr Pelter.'

And so they parted, not to meet again till just as Walter was starting on his mysterious errand.

'You see, I have got myself up, Jack, to the best of my ability,' said he, smiling, 'in case Mr Burroughes should turn out to be a countess.'

'Quite right,' returned the other dryly. 'I have been to the Academy, and the man tells me that it was a lady who asked the price of your picture; moreover, I have looked in the blue-book, and no such person as Burroughes lives at Willowbank, Regent's Park.'

'Then, perhaps, after all, it is a hoax,' said Walter, with an air of very considerable disgust.

'No, no ; that footman could never have demeaned himself by mixing himself up with anything of that sort. I should as soon believe that the Lord Chancellor played leap-frog on the wool-sack. Good-bye, and luck be with you.'

COLONIAL EXPERIENCES.

TEN or eleven years ago, Alexander Bathgate, then a youth just done with his schooling, emigrated with his father and other members of the family, from a Scottish country town, to Dunedin, in the province of Otago, New Zealand. There he has since remained, following a respectable profession, and being of an observant and literary turn, he has prepared a volume of *Colonial Experiences*, which, though imperfect in structure, has the double merit of being somewhat amusing, and, we have no doubt, perfectly truthful. The burden of all books about New Zealand is a glowing account of the colony as a place of settlement for various classes of emigrants. Our young author, after having looked about him for years, and seen different phases of colonial life, is equally eulogistic in his commendations. In particular, he tells us with a sense of humour a number of droll incidents illustrative of the strange behaviour of immigrants, plunged at once from a condition of poverty into affluence. In the old country they were straitened in means, subordinated as members of a fixed social system : now they soar into something grander and higher, with scarcely a notion of restraint.

Having said so much lately about New Zealand as a field for emigration, we shall at present do little else than glance at some of Mr Bathgate's whimsical experiences, for the benefit of those who may not have seen his production. He mentions that sometimes very odd reasons are assigned for having emigrated. Such was the case as regards a young man named Brown, a careless, jolly sort of fellow. In the old country, he was a partner in a large business concern with his father, who, being about sixty years of age, and a widower, proposed retiring. Young Brown being engaged to be married to an exceedingly pretty girl, introduced her to his father's house, where all were charmed with her, and none more so than old Brown, who congratulated his son on the excellent choice he had made, at the same time promising to come down with something handsome. Much delighted, young Brown urged the lady to fix the wedding-day at once. To this, however, she demurred, saying for excuse : 'Not just then.' The long and the short of the story is, that poor Brown had to leave home on some urgent business, and, on his return, he found that his father had married and run off with the young lady! Brown, when he was condoled with, had the pluck to say: 'I am lucky to be quit of the little hypocrite ; she must have been thinking of this little game, even when I found her alone in the drawing-room, the day I left ; confound her!' He packed up his traps, and left the house as quickly as he had entered it ; and next day he took his passage in a ship just about to sail for Otago. Speaking of the affair, he says he does not blame his father now, though he did at first, she was such a pretty, fascinating viper. I have not seen or heard anything of him for some time.'

The next case mentioned is that of Dick, a groom, who was met with at an up-country hotel.

Talking of horses, Dick gave an account of his career. He had never known his father or mother, but had been brought up by an uncle, who treated him so cruelly, that at sixteen years of age he ran away, and joined a circus troupe as a groom, until he was promoted to be a rider. In this position, he became attached to a girl of eighteen, daughter of one of the company, and skilled in horsemanship. The couple were married, and had the prospect of living together happily. As Dick said, his wife was his first friend, for he had not experienced much kindness in his early days, and he loved and valued her all the more. They had been married about four months, when one day they were going through a performance on horseback together, she riding first, leaping through hoops and dancing, he following in pursuit ; and they had come to a part in which he was supposed to overtake her, when, just as Dick came up with his wife, some fool threw a piece of orange-peel into the ring, causing her horse to swerve and she to lose her balance—she fell. Dick was too close to check his horse ; even before he could think, he passed over her ; a wild shriek rose from the spectators as he did so. It was the work of a moment to leap to the ground, and spring to where she lay. Poor fellow, as he told me of it, after the lapse of fully ten years, his voice quivered. He thought she had fainted, she lay so still ; but, as he gently raised her in his arms, a little blood oozing from her lips and nostrils told that she was hurt. A sudden horror seized Dick ; he put his hand to her breast—there was no beating ; placed his cheek to her mouth—there was no breath. "Oh ! she can't be dead," poor Dick exclaimed ; a half-groan from the crowd seemed to him to be an affirmative answer ; and he dropped senseless on the ground. It was too true ; his fair young wife was gone ; the horse had trodden on her bosom, and crushed her loving heart, Dick's only consolation being, that the poor girl had not suffered. For some time after the accident, he went about like one dazed, and it was not till after the funeral that he realised his loss. Loveless though his childhood, and friendless his boyhood, he never knew till then what loneliness really was. The very sight of a circus tent occasioned a renewed pang of grief, and as for resuming his former occupation, it was not to be thought of. With a view of removing himself as far as possible from his loss, Dick emigrated to New Zealand.'

Though in most respects well off, many immigrants are given to grumbling. Men who at home had lived on porridge or brose and other plain fare, are heard to complain of their rations of excellent food, and unreasonably grumble at everything. 'I remember, when dining in a hotel in a diggings town, the conversation turning on the differences between home and the colonies, a man present, who had been playing billiards all morning, and who, by his own account, had been a baker in a country village in Scotland, said that he thought the old country was best, that money might come in in pennies and half-pennies, but it was steadier and altogether preferable.' The landlord laughed at him, saying : "Why, man, you have lost as much at billiards this morning as you would make in two or three days where you come from." The grumbler was forced to admit the truth of the assertion. The author adds : 'Some men come to the

colonies with the anticipation of amassing a fortune without exerting themselves, and seem to expect to find the streets paved with gold. Amongst these are many young fellows, often fairly educated, but not brought up with any idea of business or trade of any kind, and the answer that is given by them, that they will do anything, is always interpreted by old colonists that they are fit for nothing, and they not unfrequently sink to menial positions.'

The experiences connected with the hiring and employment of female domestic servants are worth commemorating. Although there has latterly been a considerable immigration of this class of servants, who now can get free passages to the colony, with a certainty of employment on arrival at wages ranging from £30 to £50 yearly, the scarcity continues. It does not, therefore, surprise us to know that many of the employees put on extraordinary airs, are difficult to deal with, and dress to a degree of extravagance we are not acquainted with. The ignorance of some of these domestics is astounding. The following instance is given: 'A new servant arrived at her situation on the Saturday evening, and even on the Sunday morning she shewed symptoms which betokened verdancy. When she was engaged, in reply to a question of her future mistress, she had stated that she could do plain cooking, so that there was no hesitation in intrusting her with a leg of mutton and a cauliflower to cook for the early dinner. After church, the family returned home, and found the table laid in a decidedly original and peculiar manner, and the lady of the house confided to her husband that she thought the new domestic had not seen much. If she had any doubts on that score, they were soon set at rest, when there were placed on the table the leg of mutton and the cauliflower on the same dish, both having been roasted together in the oven, the former being burnt to a cinder, while the latter was hardly recognisable in its brown and shrivelled condition. By way of perfecting this display of ignorance, the girl had the effrontery to come and ask if the mutton was roasted to their liking, as she could not understand that clock of theirs. Inquiry elicited, that while the mutton was cooking, she had been adding her very small modicum of brains in the endeavour to ascertain the time of day by dint of consulting the aneroid barometer!'

Following on this comes an amusing case of 'cool impudence.' A housemaid in a family about three miles from town declined to be taken to church on Sunday in a dog-cart, and insisted on getting the pony-carriage; which being refused, she was most indignant, and announced her intention to depart next morning, rather than put up with such treatment. The scarcity of women in comparison to men in the colony accounts for much of this strange conduct. In a newspaper account of a ball at a place called Bannockburn, in April 1873, it is stated that dancing was kept up for three or four hours by some thirty males and two females. The struggles to get the fair demoiselles for partners were the source of no little fun. Then, such chances of being speedily and well married! The sudden transformation of a servant-girl into a grandly dressed lady is sometimes quite startling. 'Not very long ago,' says Mr Bathgate, 'I noticed a girl, whom I chanced to

know had come to the colony as an assisted immigrant, sitting in full splendour, with cloak, bouquet, and fan, beside her husband in the front row of the dress circle at the Italian opera!' Unfortunately, it is easier to decorate the person than to cultivate the mind. In the wrong use of phrases, Mrs Malaprop is beaten hollow. A girl who had been developed into a lady, was heard to speak of getting an 'antimonic' dress, meaning a dress of *moire antique*. Another gave it as her opinion 'that the mayor of their town should wear a scarlet robe lined with vermin,' meaning, of course, ermine. Male immigrants who have come suddenly into wealth are apt to make similar mistakes. One night, at a public supper-party, an individual sat opposite to a dish of *pâtes de foie gras*, which rare and costly dish he persisted in calling 'potted photographs.'

The writer offers some strange particulars regarding the gold-diggings—the extraordinary rush on the discovery of the precious metal, and the reckless extravagance of the successful diggers. 'At the first of the rush to Gabriel's Gully, in Otago, the rate of land-carriage of stores for a distance of about sixty miles was as high as a hundred pounds per ton.' As to the cost of articles of food at the diggings, flour was purchased at two shillings a pound, potatoes the same price, and a four-pound loaf cost one pound. Any trifling service which, in the old country, would be well paid by a sixpence, was never less than one pound. Money was thought nothing of, and shamefully wasted. Making a sandwich of a twenty-pound note, and eating it, was common; and so was washing in a bucket of champagne, or setting up bottles of that liquor for skittle-pins, although even, till quite lately, champagne of indifferent quality was one pound a bottle. The landlady of a hotel spoke to Mr Bathgate regretfully of these 'good old times,' adding, 'that she had seen the men, with their pockets full of gold, come into the hotel, and, times without number, "shout for all hands" (that is, treat every one in the house to drink), insisting on paying for even the cats and dogs; and this would probably continue till the lucky digger was cleaned out.' Latterly, gold-mining has settled down into a steady permanent industry, and frolics of this wild nature do not now occur.

In the volume before us, there occur some concluding details respecting the advantages of emigration, the agreeable nature of the climate of New Zealand, and the munificent offer of free passages to certain classes of immigrants. 'For one thing,' says Mr Bathgate, 'the passage hither, though long, is a safe and pleasant one; never yet has a vessel from Britain to Otago been lost, and the voyage to New Zealand is the safest in the world.' This eulogium would now, unfortunately, require modification. While we write, the world has been startled with the loss of the *Cospatrick* by fire in the Southern Atlantic, with four hundred emigrants on board, on the voyage to Auckland; and no satisfactory reason has been given for such a catastrophe. The circumstance, we fear, is calculated to discourage intending emigrants; for no one likes to have the choice of being burned to death or drowned, in trying to better his circumstances. Possibly, after the first shock of this disastrous event passes away, a feeling of reassurance may arise, for the loss of emigrant vessels to New Zealand is, on the whole, exceedingly small. It is enough, however, to cause serious alarm, and

may turn the tide of emigration elsewhither. That emigrant vessels, notwithstanding all the care taken, should be liable to be destroyed by fire, and that escape by boats is impracticable, are circumstances reflecting little credit on human ingenuity.

A TERRIBLE WEDDING-TRIP.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

THAT month passed rapidly, a portion of it being spent in the absorbing occupation of purchasing a trousseau, and the rest in various preparations at Elstonlee. Herbert, who had left us in London, in order that he might return to Cambridgeshire, and make certain arrangements of his own, had promised to rejoin us on the day before that fixed for the wedding. He did not, however, make his appearance at Woodbine Cottage until very late in the evening—so late, indeed, that mamma, annoyed by his dilatoriness, would scarcely permit him to enter the house, but insisting that ‘Minna must have a good night’s rest in order to be prepared for the long journey of the coming day,’ hurried him off, almost before we had finished our greetings, to the hotel where he was to pass the night. At the same hotel, the only one in the village, my cousin, Hugh Fernley (with the exception of Dr Adair, the sole guest invited to the wedding), was already located; and the two young men were standing together at the door of the church when, upon the following morning, we arrived there. I had not seen my lover distinctly upon the previous evening, for during his momentary visit the lamp had burned low in our little hall. But now, as, in the clear light of a sunny April morning, he advanced to meet us, I was much startled by the alteration which a fortnight’s absence had wrought in his appearance. He looked pale and worn; but in addition to this, there was, I thought, a change in his expression—an indefinable peculiarity about his whole aspect, which alarmed me.

‘Dear Herbert, you are ill! I exclaimed, as, the salutations over, we turned to enter the church.

‘O no! I am not,’ he replied hastily, drawing my hand through his arm, and passing beneath the porch. But stooping down when half-way up the aisle, he added in a whisper: ‘Don’t be alarmed, dearest, but things are all wrong at my place near Madrid, and I’m anxious to be off. We must go to Spain at once. Come! let us be quick and get married; and then I’ll bear my flower, my tender blossom, to the sunny south.’

The forms of endearment employed in the last sentence were not such as Herbert had been accustomed to address to me, and I did not quite like them. Moreover, I felt greatly disappointed, for it had been arranged that our wedding-trip should have for its destination the Italian lakes; and now it appeared we were to travel in Spain. Giving vent to my feelings of vexation, I whispered back, as we reached the altar: ‘Then we shall have to give up Italy!’

‘Not at all; we shall do nothing of the kind,’ he returned with a triumphant smile. ‘We shall go to Spain, and Italy, and Kamchatka too.’

There was no time to ask what he meant, for the clergyman was already in his place, and the service commenced without delay. The hour which followed was one of much confusion, for, upon coming out of the church, we were informed by

Mr Fernley, to whom the travelling arrangements had been confided, that, as he had that morning discovered, he had made a mistake about the time at which the London express from the north would pass a certain junction where we were to join it, and that it would be necessary for us to leave Elstonlee much earlier than we had intended. So our hurried breakfast was soon over, and a hasty leave taken of mamma. Accompanied by Dr Adair and Hugh, who had promised to see us as far as the junction referred to, we were off, almost before we knew it, upon the first stage of our wedding-tour. Upon entering the carriage, my husband had, of course, placed himself by my side, whilst my cousin and the doctor had taken the seats immediately opposite to us, and I had scarcely had time to regain my composure, after the bustle and excitement which had attended our abrupt departure from home, when it was again disturbed by the singular conduct of the latter.

Fixing his eyes upon Mr St Julien’s face, the physician appeared to be studying him closely, and put to him question after question, as if to draw him into conversation. I could not attribute this to jealousy, for there was no sign of the existence of that feeling; but I began to feel seriously annoyed with what I considered his rudeness, especially when I saw that Herbert noticed and disliked his obtrusive attention. That he did so was evident, for whilst he replied to all his questions very quietly, he seemed to grow uneasy beneath the fixity of the doctor’s gaze, and once or twice I caught him returning it with a resentful glance.

We had to wait a few minutes at the station; and whilst Herbert, apparently glad to escape further impertinent observation, promenaded the platform with Hugh, Dr Adair drew me a little aside, and placing his hand upon my arm, he said, in a tone of much solicitude: ‘Pray, tell me, do you notice anything peculiar about Mr St Julien’s aspect this morning?’

‘O doctor! do you think he is ill?’ I inquired in return, alarmed by my friend’s serious manner, and look of disquietude.

‘Well, no; I do not think that,’ he replied meditatively; ‘but, but—you will excuse me, I hope—but I fancy he seems more excited than the occasion warrants; and I—’

‘Excuse me,’ I interrupted angrily; ‘but I cannot listen to such remarks about my husband’s appearance, Dr Adair.’ And turning away with a feeling of relief at his assurance that Herbert was not unwell, but of extreme annoyance at his last remark, I was about to leave him.

‘I will say nothing more to offend you, Mrs St Julien,’ said the doctor, following me with an apology. And immediately introducing another subject of conversation, he drew my attention to a cord which ran along at the tops of the carriages, and extended the whole length of a train near which we were standing. This, he explained to me, was a signal which any person might use who desired to stop the train when in motion between one station and another. And whilst I listened with a cold politeness, which was the effect of my previous displeasure, he carefully pointed out to me the manner in which it was to be worked.

Scarcely had he finished his instructions, when the express rushed into the station; and in another instant Herbert and I had taken our places in a

carriage which we were glad to have been able to secure for ourselves alone.

My good-bye to Dr Adair had not been a very warm one ; and just as the train was upon the point of starting, a sudden remorse came over me. Letting down the sash, I looked out of the window with the intention of signing him a more kindly farewell. As I did so, a head was hastily drawn into the next carriage. An absurd fancy seized me that it was his, and in order to dissipate it, I turned to the platform.

Hugh stood alone where we had left him ; and though my eyes rapidly scanned every portion of the station, Dr Adair was nowhere to be seen.

Calling my husband to the window, and pointing to the disappearing platform, and the solitary figure of my cousin, I asked what he thought could have become of the physician. And then, at the risk of being laughed at, I told him of the impression I had that the head I had momentarily seen protruded from the adjoining carriage was Dr Adair's.

'No, no ; it was not : I know better than that,' was the reply I received, in a tone which startled me by its vehemence ; and drawing me back into the carriage, Mr St Julien closed the window with a bang. Then stooping down and bringing his face to a level with my own, he added in a loud whisper : 'I'll tell you what ; that man's the devil, and I'm glad he's gone.' I was so thunderstruck by these words, and by Herbert's singular and unlovable manner, that I sat staring at him in silent surprise, wondering how he could have allowed his resentment at Dr Adair's conduct to have carried him so far. But if I expected any apology, I was doomed to disappointment ; none followed, and Herbert himself appeared to be quite unconscious that he had given me occasion for offence. After sitting for a considerable length of time, with his gaze directed through the window, and his brows knit, as though in deep thought, he rose, and without taking any further notice of me, drew out a large travelling-bag, which he had insisted upon having placed beneath the seat at the further end of the carriage. This he unlocked, and, whilst I still gazed at him in indignant astonishment, proceeded to extract from it what appeared to me a heterogeneous mass of rubbish ; and selecting from amongst it a brilliant scarlet and white cricketing-cap, he placed it upon his head, with the peak turned towards the back ; then, seating himself in front of me, he asked how I liked it. Trembling, as an indefinite terror was creeping over me, I replied, that it was 'very pretty' ; and stretching out my hand, with a pretence at a playfulness I did not feel, I attempted to adjust it correctly upon his head.

'Let it alone !' he exclaimed angrily, seizing my hand with a rough grasp. 'Don't you see that it's more like a turban than way ? And as we're going to Turkey, we must do in Turkey as the Turkeys do.'

'Going to Turkey ! What do you mean, dear Herbert ?' I cried, in serious alarm. 'How can we go to Spain, and Italy, and Turkey, and yet get back to England in a month, as we promised mamma to do ?' And why do you speak to me so strangely, Herbert ? Oh, Herbert, you are ill ! I am sure of it,' I continued, bursting into tears. 'You are so dreadfully pale, and you don't act or look in the least like yourself.'

'I don't look in the least like myself, don't I ?'

he repeated, bursting into a loud laugh. 'Ha, ha ! that's good. Probably, then, I look like a Chinaman ?' And lowering his voice again to the mysterious tone in which he had already twice addressed me, he added : 'Do you know, love—don't mention it on any account, pray, but I had a letter this morning from the Emperor of China, in which he tells me that three large estates of mine, at Pekin, have been burned to the ground by the natives. The news has rather upset me.'

'O Herbert !' I began ; but —

'I say, are you my first wife or my second ?' was the irrelevant remark with which my pleadings were interrupted.

I looked at my husband in dismay. Was he drunk ? or—what was the matter with him ? 'Herbert, Herbert !' I cried, shaking in every limb, as a dreadful suspicion suggested itself, 'please, please, don't frighten me so ! You know very well that you never had any other wife than myself. Why will you persist in saying such odd things ?'

'Was it a diddle-diddle darling, then !' exclaimed my companion, his excitement evidently roused to a high pitch by the expression of my alarm. And throwing his arms round me, he continued, in a loud and jaunty tone : 'Don't cry, Ada ; we're going to visit our estates, you know, one after another of them. We're off to Spain and Portugal, and the north pole and the south, and the meridian and the new moon. We'll set everything in order, and bring home cart-loads of diamonds and rubies and bank-notes. You shall have a palace of pearls, and I'll crown you like a queen, for I'm as rich as Cresus. Rich ! rich ! rich !'. The last words rose to a shrill scream, and Mr St Julien's arms moved in wild gesticulations as he uttered them.

My horrible suspicion passed into a still more horrible certainty. In that instant, a great change passed over me. My courage and spirits rose to meet the emergency, and from a timid, helpless girl, I was transformed at once into a woman strong and self-dependent. Collecting my faculties, I endeavoured to grasp the situation in which I was placed. In all innocence and unsuspicion, I had that morning married this man ; and now I was alone with him in a compartment of an express train ! What was to be done ? With an air of as much unconcern as I could assume, I took up a Railway Guide which lay by my side, and whilst turning its pages with apparent carelessness, consulted it with the deepest anxiety in order to learn at what station the train would first stop. To my dismay, I found that at least an hour must elapse before there would be any chance of escape ; and I could only resolve to remain perfectly quiet and self-possessed, and to pray that Herbert might not in the meantime become violent. My resolution was soon put to a severe test. I was with difficulty striving to make a soothing reply to a remark which he had just made, when, with a shrill whistle, the train rushed into the darkness of a long tunnel. Another instant, and I was cowering in abject terror in a corner of the carriage, for, above the reverberating thunder of the train, had arisen a sound which made my flesh creep as I listened. A strange unearthly laugh, ending in a wild shriek, was uttered close by my side, followed, almost ere it was ended, by another, and yet another. To my terrified imagination,

hours instead of minutes elapsed before the train glided out again into the blinding daylight. As it did so, I glanced at Herbert, and perceived that he had now grown perfectly calm. There was, however, a new expression in his eyes, which warned me to keep full possession of all my powers of mind.

'I say, Ada,' he remarked presently, bending forwards, and again addressing me by the name which was not mine, 'I've got such a capital idea; it'll amuse you, I'm sure. I've just decided upon paying a visit to the Cyclops, and I know they'd take it as a great compliment if my wife had only one eye, like themselves. Ha, ha! isn't it a good joke? You won't mind it, will you?'

The last question was asked in a conciliatory tone, but, as he spoke, I observed the blade of an open penknife glittering in his hand. With a palpitating heart, but a strong endeavour still to retain my self-possession, I sought about for some method of escape. The train was still going at full speed, whizzing with maddening rapidity past the minor stations, whilst the one at which it was to stop was yet, as I knew, far away. What was to be done? I again asked myself in agonising perplexity. A sudden inspiration occurred to me—there was the signal! Until that morning, I had been ignorant of the existence of such a thing. My heart bounded with gratitude to Dr Adair for having pointed out to me the manner of working it, whilst a vague wonder crossed my mind whether he could have had any suspicion that the knowledge might prove useful.

These thoughts passed through my brain with the rapidity of lightning. One moment only had elapsed since Herbert's horrible proposition had been uttered; and to avert attention from my movements, I began, in quite an indifferent tone, to reason with him, and suggested that the Cyclops, having probably seen quite sufficient of the species with one eye, might be interested and amused by an introduction to a variety with two, and that it would therefore be much better that I should be allowed to visit them in my natural condition.

Whilst thus speaking, I slipped into a seat nearer the window, for I had been occupying one in the centre of the carriage, and as I did so, the thought occurred to me, that the signal-cord ran along only one side of the train, and that it might possibly not be on that towards which I had moved. The idea turned me sick with apprehension, for on this sole chance, as I imagined, rested my fate; my husband having immediately taken the seat I had vacated, and thus placed himself between me and the opposite window, repeating, with much emphasis, his belief that the mutilation which he desired would be a gratifying compliment to the Cyclops.

'Oh, very well; I daresay you are right,' I replied, with the nonchalance which was becoming momentarily more difficult to maintain. 'But, Herbert, dear, you know we are a long way off the country yet, and if you don't object, I should prefer waiting until we are a little nearer.'

Whilst offering this new suggestion, I carelessly placed my hand upon the sash of the window, and was just about to lower it, when a strong grasp was laid upon my outstretched arm.

'No, no; I'm not going to wait!' he screamed, pulling my hand away, and keeping a firm hold

upon it. 'I shall be busy by-and-by, looking after my estates; it'll be better to get it done at once.'

'But, Herbert,' I cried, making this further objection rather faintly, for my courage had almost vanished at his touch, 'you might possibly make some blunder over it. Let us wait till we get to the hotel in London, and then we will send for a doctor, and have it done properly and scientifically.'

This remark, probably because it inferentially taxed him with want of skill, greatly infuriated him, and as he growled out a savage refusal of my request, the cruel hands tightened upon my arm. I neither fainted nor screamed. My eye had fallen upon my dressing-case, which had been placed upon the parcel-rack running along at the top of the carriage, and stood close by the opposite window. Professing to be reconciled to his design, I observed that I would merely take from my case a clean handkerchief, and I would then be at his disposal. My cheerfulness completely disarming suspicion, he allowed me to rise; and passing over to the further end of the carriage, I suddenly lowered the window, stretched out my hand, and groped for the signal-cord. In vain, in vain! Head followed hand, as I eagerly glanced above and below. There was no cord. I was at the wrong side of the carriage. A cry of despair and horror burst from my lips as I felt my husband seize me by the waist, drag me backwards from the window, and throw me into a seat. He stooped to pick up the knife, which the shock had jerked from his grasp, and—was it fancy? Or, oh! could it indeed be reality?—as he sought upon the ground, some little time unsuccessfully, the train appeared to be slackening speed. Yearningly, I strove to realise the truth. O yes! it was moving more slowly; I was certain of that. We must be nearing the — station; I must have exaggerated the time it would take. Hope revived; but a yell of satisfaction announced the recovery of the lost knife; already it was brandished in my face, when, with the energy of desperation, and with both my hands, I grasped the cruel hand which held it. Another moment, and I felt myself raised up and flung violently down. My head crashed upon the flooring of the carriage; blinding sparks flew before my eyes; horrible distortions seemed to pass over the inflamed features which were bending over me, then a black shadow slid between, and all was darkness.

When I recovered consciousness, I was lying upon my own little bed in the cottage at Elstonlee, where for weeks I had been tossing in the delirium of brain-fever. It was but slowly that recollection of the terrible scene through which I had passed returned to me; and only by degrees, as I could bear it, did my mother communicate to me the following particulars. The head which I had seen withdrawn into the adjoining carriage at the junction station was indeed that of Dr Adair; for, suspecting the truth, and filled with the deepest anxiety upon my account, he had, at the last moment, stepped into the train. The unearthly shriek uttered by Herbert in the tunnel had been heard by him, and he had immediately used the signal; but the rapid rate at which the train was travelling, had prevented it from being very quickly responded to. In miserable suspense, he had stood at the door of his compartment

whilst the speed gradually slackened ; and the instant he could do so with safety, he had rushed, aided by a guard, to my assistance, and had succeeded in overpowering my assailant in the very nick of time. On reaching the large town a few miles distant, Mr St Julien was carried at once to an asylum, whilst I, in a state of unconsciousness, was brought home by my rescuer. The following morning, a sensational paragraph appeared in the newspaper, describing the affair ; and upon the succeeding day, a lady called at Woodbine Cottage. She introduced herself as the sister-in-law of Mr St Julien, and informed mamma and Dr Adair, who was present at the interview, that the poor young man had, some time previously, gone down to his house at Cambridge, in what she considered an unsettled state of mind ; that indications of more serious aberration had speedily followed ; and that, in the end, he had been obliged to be placed under the care of a keeper. Managing, however, to elude the man's vigilance, he had effected his escape so cleverly that his friends had been unable to trace him, and had only done so eventually by means of the newspaper paragraph.

The further information elicited from this lady may be condensed into a few words. In his youth, my unfortunate husband had been distinguished for great learning and studious habits. He had married, when very young, a beautiful girl, to whom he was ardently attached, and who had almost immediately been accidentally drowned ; and following closely upon this disaster had come the failure of a bank in which the bulk of his large property was invested. Insanity was hereditary in the family ; and although no symptoms of the malady had previously exhibited themselves in him, poor Herbert's mind had been completely unhinged by his troubles, and for some months he had been violently mad. His recovery, when it took place, appeared to be a most perfect one ; but, notwithstanding this, he had always retained peculiarities upon the two subjects which had originated his derangement. Never, since her death, had he been known to allude to his wife even in the most distant manner ; though, as has been seen, he once or twice, in his second fit of insanity, addressed me by the name she had borne, probably mistaking our identity. The other and more notable singularity, which evidenced the remains of disease, was the delusion, under which he constantly laboured, that he was the owner of immense wealth and of numerous estates and properties. So entirely sane, however, was he in every other respect, that it was by no means remarkable that two simple women like my mother and myself should have remained in ignorance of his condition. Still, looking back upon that time with the light thrown upon it by subsequent events, I can see clearly that, during the latter weeks of our intercourse in Torquay and London, Mr St Julien's mind had already begun to waver, although it was not finally thrown off the balance until the excitement attendant upon the thought of immediate marriage.

Whilst in Cambridge, he had not, it appeared, mentioned that subject to any person ; but upon being placed under restraint, he had exercised much shrewdness in evading his keeper, and had contrived to reach Elstonlee in time. With the cunning characteristic of the insane, he had

managed to control himself whilst in the company of my friends. Little now remains to be told.

During that terrible ride in the express train, every atom of love I had felt for my husband was extinguished as completely as though it had never existed. Horror took the place of every other sentiment ; and when, upon his restoration to health, he besought me to live with him, I not only refused to do so, but declined even to see him again. Too delicate to press the matter, my unhappy husband relinquished his claim, and, settling through his lawyer a liberal annuity on me, he started once more for the continent. Two years afterwards, I received the announcement of his death, which had taken place in Rome, and had been occasioned by rheumatic fever ; and three years later, I again stood before the altar, and left it the wife of a sober middle-aged gentleman, whose constancy and devotion had won from me a depth of affection never in reality accorded to my poor Herbert, but fully deserved by Dr Adair.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE past and the present year are likely to be conspicuous in the annals of geographical discovery. Great things have been done in the way of marine explorations, and more and more of the mystery that hangs over Africa is dispelled. Two expeditions are now on their way from Cairo to the Upper Nile, whence they are to travel to the capital of Darfur, and the capital of Kordofan, to make surveys, to improve existing wells, to sink new wells in suitable places. One of the parties will then take a south-easterly direction down to the coast, while the other will explore Lake Albert and its neighbourhood to some distance beyond the equator. A third party is to make a geological and mineralogical survey of the countries lying between the Nile and the Red Sea, and Eastern Soudan : and in this way the resources of the vast regions lying to the south of Egypt will be made known, and mostly by Englishmen.

Then, as is already known, Lieutenant Cameron, who set out from the west coast, has reached the region of the great lakes, and Livingstone's river, the Lualaba, which, as is believed, will prove to be the Congo. The Berlin African Society are about to send another expedition under Captain Von Hommeyer to explore Central Africa. And the exploration of Palestine is going on with satisfactory results.

In Newfoundland, the carrying out of a geological survey has added largely to our knowledge of the geography of that important island. Regions rich in timber have been explored, of which nothing was previously known, except from the reports of adventurous trappers ; and hundreds of square miles of productive land are available for settlement in a part of the country supposed to have been barren and worthless. Through this region, which is on the east side of the island, a navigable river—the Gander—has been surveyed

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up to its source in a lake, a distance of thirty miles ; and deposits of gypsum and of coal, and indications of petroleum and of salt springs, have been discovered.

But perhaps most remarkable of all is the cruise of H.M.S. *Basilisk* in the Eastern seas, especially in Torres Strait and along the coasts of New Guinea. When the new charts of those regions come to be published, then, on comparison with the old charts, will our gain in geography and hydrography become apparent. In the words of the official Report, the officers and men of the *Basilisk* 'have surveyed about twelve hundred miles of coast-line, have made known at least twelve first-class harbours, several navigable rivers, and more than one hundred islands,' and are able to announce the discovery of a shorter route between Australia and China than any hitherto navigated in those latitudes. Among the islands are some as large as the Isle of Wight : they are described as fertile and populous, the inhabitants being partially civilised Malays. On the north-east coast of the mainland, two mountains, eleven thousand feet in height, were seen, and were named after the two distinguished politicians, Gladstone and Disraeli.

Some years ago, we mentioned the expedition which set out from Bhamo, in Burmah, under Major Sladen, and made an exploratory journey to the important province of Yunan and back. Another expedition is now organised to travel the same route, but go farther. The commander of the present party is Colonel Horace Browne : he is accompanied by officers qualified to make scientific observations, and to collect and describe natural objects. In carrying out his instructions, he will pass and visit Momein and Talifoo, and at the latter he is to embark on the great river Yangtse, and explore it all the way down to Shanghai. The attempts to enter China from the west have been very few : if this should be successful, geographers as well as traders will soon follow on its track. Add to all this the polar expedition now in active preparation, and it would seem that, notwithstanding all that has been done, there is more than ever remaining to be discovered. As regards the polar expedition, we rejoice to see that it is to be commanded by Captain Nares of the *Challenger*, an excellent seaman, in the prime of vigour and capability.

The last published volume of *Transactions of the Institution of Naval Architects* contains papers on the best form of ships, on the safe limit of loading steamers, on steamers of high speed for crossing the Channel, and others which shew the interest taken by practical men in the several subjects. There is also a description of an instrument called by Mr Hearson, its inventor, a 'strophometer or speed indicator.' This instrument combines a few wheels, a spring, a dial ; is fixed in any convenient place in an engine-room, and on being connected by a catgut line with some moving part of the engine, the pointer on the dial indicates the speed of the engine. Even in a rough sea, when the vessel is rolling and pitching, and the speed of the engines necessarily fluctuates, the pointer still shews the true speed within half a revolution, which is sufficiently accurate. We are informed that a strophometer, such as here described, has been at work in H.M.S. *Aigincourt* for about nine months, and that the engineer can tell at a glance, and

within a quarter of a revolution, the speed of the engines. Thus, this instrument supplies a want which has long been felt, and by ships of war more than others, because, during naval evolutions, the ships have to keep accurate station one with another, and therefore a knowledge of their speed at any moment is indispensable. The instrument may be fixed on deck, as well as in the engine-room, where it can be referred to by the officer of the watch. With some additional apparatus, it may also be used to indicate the speed of the ship.

Another instrument, described in the same volume, is 'the universal dromoscope,' for correcting the course of a ship. Seafaring men know that the compass does not shew the true direction in which the ship is sailing : allowance must be made for the 'declination'—that is, the divergence of the needle from the true north ; and for the 'deviation,' which means the amount of error produced in the direction of the needle by the magnetism of the ship herself. These two occasions of error require to be guarded against by ceaseless watchfulness ; and as an effectual means of overcoming them, the dromoscope has been invented by Dr Paugger, Director of the Imperial Practical School of Trieste. It resembles a ship's clock, with a compass-card division on each side. An index on each card communicates with machinery in the interior. Before the voyage is commenced it is adjusted to the binnacle, and the deviation is calculated by a professional person ; the dromoscope is then set, and delivered to the captain. By a little additional calculation, the points may be marked on the compass card for the fresh indications. For example, a vessel bound from Trieste for Bombay : marks might be made for Corfu, Suez, Aden, and Bombay ; and the captain, on arriving at those places, would have only to place the zero of the verniers to the corresponding marks, and find at once the correct deviation registered in his dromoscope. Wherever he may be, the captain can always tell the true course of the ship. We may therefore believe that the dromoscope will be accepted by all maritime nations. It has been already adopted in the imperial German and the imperial Austrian navy. It may be made of various sizes down to the small size of a watch without impairing its efficiency.

The peculiar metal, vanadium, seems likely to be useful to photographers. This metal, as chemical readers are aware, is found in the ore of copper and lead, and of some other minerals, and belongs to the same series of metals as antimony, arsenic, and bismuth. Its properties have been ably investigated by Professor Roscoe of Owens College, Manchester ; and in a recent communication to the Philosophical Society of that town, he states that 'paper, which does not contain any size of animal origin, when coated with a solution of sodium orthovanadate, is darkened on exposure to light. The tint, however, never becomes darker than a slate colour. If the paper thus prepared be immersed in a solution of silver nitrate after exposure to light, the colour in the exposed part instantly changes to a deep brown or a black colour, varying according to the amount of exposure.' We are further informed that 'a tint of the decomposed vanadate, which is of so slight an amount as to be with difficulty distinguished from the whiteness of the paper, will, by immersion in the silver nitrate, be toned so as to exhibit a very perceptible tint.'

Here, then, is a paper which photographers may experiment with after their manner, and discover the effects of which it is capable. It may yield unexpected effects, and reveal something more than we yet know of the action of light.

A collection of 'palaeolithic implements,' old stone tools and weapons, has been exhibited at Owens College. They were found in the gravel of river-valleys in England and France, and we notice the fact, not because of its novelty, but in order to mention what was said thereupon by Professor Boyd Dawkins. Similar implements have been found in India, and their occurrence along with the remains of extinct mammalia, 'proves that man was living, both in Europe and in Southern Asia from the Ganges to Ceylon, in the same rude uncivilised state, at the same time in the life-history of the earth.' Professor Dawkins further drew attention to the traces of art and handicraft remaining on the implements, and drew the inference that their former owners 'may be represented at the present day by the Eskimos.'

The question whether the moon has an atmosphere or not, is not yet settled; but the balance of evidence is in the affirmative. Mr David Winstanley, in a communication to the Society above named, points out the observations that favour the affirmative, and suggests as another proof the colours seen around the sun during an eclipse. 'Considering,' he remarks, in concluding his argument, 'that the non-existence of a lunar atmosphere is undemonstrated and undemonstrable, that it is in opposition to analogy, and that even simple refraction has given evidence of such an inconsiderable atmospheric envelope as we might at most expect a body of the moon's small mass to have, it certainly seems to me that the balance of probability lies in favour of the theory that the rainbow hues observed at total eclipses of the sun are really the results of chromatic dispersion effected by a lunar atmosphere.'

To the paragraph on the value of repose on the cure of aneurism in a recent *Mouth*, may be added the following from a contemporary journal on the use of rest as a cure for pulmonary consumption. Rest being so beneficial in surgical cases, it occurred to Dr Berkart that it would be beneficial in that disease of the lungs popularly known as consumption. Taking it for granted that, under the circumstances, the movements of breathing and the contact of fresh air with the inflamed surface are hurtful, he keeps portions of the lungs in a state of repose by means of straps and bandages. The doctor is hopeful that this mode of treatment will arrest the progress of the disease. When we hear of his success, we shall have much pleasure in making it known.

A curious fact in natural history is mentioned in the *Transactions* of the Royal Society of Mauritius. Flamingoes used to be numerous in the island, but they gradually disappeared, and during the last hundred years, none has been seen. But a large flock had arrived and settled in marshy places along the shore. They are supposed to have migrated from Madagascar. Another noteworthy fact is that, with a view to check the increasing dryness of the climate, 800,000 trees and 150,000 seed-holes have been planted on barren mountain-slopes and other waste places. The planting still goes on; and young islanders of the present day may live to see tall forests on the now unproductive wilds, and

rejoice in the restoration of the blessed rain to its former fruitful quantity.

The collection of statistics is a slow process, hence it is that the Mineral Statistics for the year 1873 were not published until the end of last year. The quantity of coal raised was 127,016,747 tons; and of iron-ore, 15,577,499 tons. More than 35,000,000 tons of the coal were consumed in making iron, more than 27,000,000 in producing steam-power for manufactories, and more than 20,000,000 tons in dwelling-houses—that is, in keeping *home* comfortable. The 'balance,' as the Americans say, was burnt in other trade operations, in the production of gas, and nearly 13,000,000 tons were sent away to foreign countries. When looked at in detail, the results under one head alone—manufactories, are surprising. There are 2500 cotton factories, with 34,000,000 spindles, and 450,000 power-looms; 500 flax factories, with 1,500,000 spindles, and 32,500 power-looms; 220 hemp, jute, and shoddy factories, with 150,000 spindles, and 700 power-looms; 700 silk factories, with 750,000 spindles, and 10,000 power-looms; 220 woollen factories, with 2,500,000 spindles; 650 worsted factories, with 1,750,000 spindles, and 56,000 power-looms. More than forty million spindles, and more than half a million power-looms! What a prodigious amount of whirling, whizzing, roaring, and dashing to and fro these figures represent! The total value of all the minerals produced in 1873 was £70,722,992.

Improvements in rifles have led to improvements in fowling-pieces in respect of range, velocity, and what sportsmen call 'pattern.' But these advantages have been accompanied by a serious disadvantage, for the quicker and farther the shot travel, the more do the shot scatter, to the joy of the bird, and the sorrow of the shooter. Old stage-coachmen used to have an axiom which they impressed on young beginners in the art of driving: 'Don't let 'em sprawl!' that is, the horses; and sportsmen who hope for success must beware of letting their shot sprawl. Their answer would perhaps be: 'Give us a gun that will keep them close.' Such a gun, it is said, may now be had. Messrs Dougall, gunmakers of London and Glasgow, have an improved breech-loading fowling-piece which, they say, approaches the rifle in swiftness and range, and in accuracy of aim. If the invention be as efficient as is described, sportsmen, henceforth, will not have to complain that their weapons are not sufficiently destructive, though from statistics of game annually killed, one would imagine there is already destruction enough.

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